

Message Text

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SUBJECT: ANTHONY LEWIS ARTICLE

FULL TEXT OF JULY 20 ANTHONY LEWIS COLUMN FOLLOWS:

BEGIN TEXT. WHEN THE SOVIET UNION BEHAVES AS IT HAS IN THESE
LAST WEEKS, WE ARE REVOLTED. TO CONVICT A DISSIDENT OF
"TREASON" BECAUSE HE TALKED TO A FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT, TO
SEND SOMEONE AWAY FOR YEARS BECAUSE HE WANTED TO EMIGRATE,
AND HUNG A BANNER OUT HIS WINDOW--THESE ARE THE ACTS OF MEN
WHO ARE IN THE DEEPEST SENSE UNCIVILIZED.

ALONG WITH THE FEELING OF REVULSION THERE IS FRUSTRATION.
WE WANT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE SOVIET REPRESSION, BUT WHAT
WILL ACTUALLY HAVE AN EFFECT? THE ANSWER IS FAR FROM CLEAR.
BUT THE RECENT TRIALS SHOULD REMIND US OF SOME BASICS IN
APPROACHING THE SOVIET SYSTEM.

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1. IT IS AN ESSENTIALLY LAWLESS SYSTEM, WHOSE RULERS
EVIDENTLY SO DOUBT THEIR OWN LEGITIMACY THAT THEY FEAR
THE SLIGHTEST DISSENT.

A PARTICULAR FALLACY, IN DEALING WITH THE SOVIETS, IS TO
ANALOGIZE THEIR SOCIETY TO OURS. ANDREW YOUNG, IN HIS
BLUNDERING REMARK ABOUT POLITICAL PRISONERS, WAS TRYING TO

OFFER HOPE THAT SOVIET DISSIDENTS WOULD SUCCEED AS AMERICAN CIVIL RIGHTS WORKERS DID. "CONSTANT EVOLUTION IS THE RULE EVERYWHERE," HE SAID. BUT THE ANALOGY IS FALSE; THE USSR IS NOT SUBJECT TO OUR DYNAMIC SOCIAL PROCESS.

2. THE RUSSIANS ARE HIGHLY RESISTANT TO OPEN EXTERNAL PRESSURE FOR CHANGE.

AMERICANS WHO THOUGHT THE USSR WOULD EASE JEWISH EMIGRATION IN RETURN FOR AMERICAN TRADE CONCESSIONS, INCLUDING ME, KNOW THAT THE JACKSON-VANIK AMENDMENT DID NOT WORK. SIMILARLY, THOSE OF US WHO AGREED WITH PRESIDENT CARTER'S PRESSURE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE SOVIET UNION MAY WORRY NOW THAT ANATOLY SHCHARANSKY AND OTHERS HAVE PAID A PENALTY.

NEVERTHELESS, THE SOVIET SYSTEM HAS CHANGED.

MR. SHCHARANSKY WAS CONVICTED ON WHAT BY WESTERN LEGAL STANDARDS WAS NO EVIDENCE, IN A CHARADE OF A TRIAL. BUT IN STALIN'S DAY HE WOULD HAVE HAD NO TRIAL; HE WOULD JUST HAVE BEEN SHOT OR SENT TO A LABOR CAMP. THE REPRESSION TODAY IS MUCH MORE SELECTIVE. WE SURMISE THAT THERE ARE FORCES INSIDE THE SOVIET RULING CLASS FAVORING INTERNAL RELAXATION, BUT THAT THEY ARE OVERRIDDEN FROM TIME TO TIME BY TOUGHER POLICE ELEMENTS. NOW, WITH A LEADERSHIP TRANS-

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SITION LOOMING, IS ONE OF THOSE TIMES.

FROM ALL THIS, IT SEEMS TO ME TO FOLLOW THAT THE WEST HAS TO TAKE THE LONG VIEW. THERE ARE NO QUICK WAYS TO BRING ABOUT A MORE HUMANE SOVIET SOCIETY. AND IF WE LET IMMEDIATE OUTRAGE DETERMINE OUR POLICY. WE MAY DAMAGE THE LONG-TERM POSSIBILITY OF AFFECTING SOVIET BEHAVIOR.

FOR EXAMPLE, IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED THAT THE UNITED STATES, IN RETALIATION FOR THE SHCHARANSKY AFFAIR, PULL OUT OF THE 1980 OLYMPICS IN MOSCOW. IT IS AN APPEALING IDEA, ADVANCED BY GOOD PEOPLE--MRS. SHCHARANSKY AMONG OTHERS. BUT IF THOUSANDS OF FOREIGN VISITORS COME FOR THE OLYMPICS, MAY THEY NOT BE A MODEST FORCE FOR OPENING UP SOVIET SOCIETY?

AGAIN, WHEN THE RUSSIANS USE CRUDE TACTICS AGAINST AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS, AS THEY ARE NOW DOING, U.S. RETALIATION AGAINST SOVIET CORRESPONDENTS MAY BE A NECESSARY OR UNAVOIDABLE COURSE. BUT IF THE PROCESS ENDS WITH FEWER REPORTERS IN EACH OTHER'S COUNTRIES, WOULD THAT SERVE AMERICA'S INTEREST OR THE SOVIET HARD-LINERS?

WE HAVE TO BE ON GUARD AGAINST ACTIONS THAT SATISFY AN EMOTIONAL DESIRE TO LOOK "TOUGH" BUT THAT MAY ACTUALLY HURT AMERICAN INTERESTS. FOR INSTANCE, THE UNITED STATES HAS STRONG REASONS, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC, TO LIMIT NUCLEAR ARMS. IF A GOOD SALT AGREEMENT IS ATTAINABLE, IT WOULD MAKE NO SENSE TO SAY THAT WE ARE GOING TO WAIT FOR IT UNTIL THE SOVIET UNION BECOMES A DEMOCRATIC STATE.

THE SILLIEST IDEA, IN MY VIEW, WOULD BE FOR THE UNITED STATES TO DECLARE THE HELSINKI AGREEMENT OF 1975 VOID BECAUSE THE SOVIETS HAVE FAILED TO COMPLY WITH ITS PROVISIONS FOR FREER MOVEMENT OF IDEAS AND PERSONS. HELSINKI TURNS WHAT WOULD OTHERWISE BE WESTERN VIEWS INTO INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS, AND WE OUGHT TO GO ON DEMANDING THAT THE USSR

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FULFILL THEM. AS THE ECONOMIST OF LONDON PUT IT LAST WEEK, "THERE IS NO REASON TO LET THE RUSSIANS OFF. . .THE HELSINKI HOOK."

THE IMPERATIVE FOR THE WEST IS TO STAY TRUE TO ITS IDEAS. THAT SOUNDS LIKE AN EMPTY TACTIC IN A WORLD OF POWER BUT IN FACT IT IS NOT. BY SIMPLY MAKING CLEAR THAT WE OPPOSE SOVIET REPRESSION, WE SOUND A CHORD SYMPATHETIC TO MUCH OF MANKIND. EVEN THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY CALLED ON THE SOVIETS RECENTLY TO END "ALL PROSECUTIONS AND REPRESSIONS." HUMANE VALUES DO HAVE POWER.

IF PRESIDENT CARTER DOES LITTLE MORE THAN MAKE PLAN HIS SCORN FOR THE CORRUPTION OF LAW AND TRUTH IN THE SOVIET TRIALS, HE WILL HAVE DONE A GOOD DEAL. BUT THE DUTY IS NOT ON THE GOVERNMENT ALONE BUT ON ANY PRIVATE CITIZEN OR INSTITUTION THAT DEALS WITH THE SOVIET UNION. WHEN AN AMERICAN COMPANY STANDS STILL FOR THE ABUSE OF ITS REPRESENTATIVE IN MOSCOW--AS INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER SEEMS TO HAVE DONE JUST NOW--THE DAMAGE IS GENERAL.

HUMAN BEINGS MATTER: THAT IS OUR BELIEF, AND WE MUST STAKE OUR ALL UPON IT. SO WE MUST REMEMBER ANATOLY SHCHARANSKY AND YURI ORLOV AND ALEKSANDR GINZBURG, THE OTHER HUMAN-RIGHTS CAMPAIGNERS JUST JAILED; AND VLADIMIR SLEPAK AND IDA NUDEL, JEWS WHO WANTED TO EMIGRATE. WE CAN HOPE TO MOVE THE SOVIET UNION ONLY BY DEGREES, BUT WE MUST NEVER ACCEPT TYRANNY.

END TEXT.

CHRISTOPHER

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